

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

TRSE-00 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 XMB-02

OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGR-01 /094 W

-----001040 142021Z /64

R 131647Z APR 78

FM AMCONGEN NAPLES IT

TO AMEMBASSY ROME

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6003

AMCONSUL GENOA 115

AMCONGEN MILAN

AMCONGEN FLORENCE

AMCONSUL PALERMO 144

AMCONSUL TRIESTE 47

AMCONSUL TURIN 48

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAPLES 0693

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, IT

SUBJECT: DECENTRALIZATION: LAW 382

REF: ROME 18039

1. WE HAVE LOOKED HARD FOR POSSIBLE PROGRESS TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF LAW 382 IN THE CONSULAR DISTRICT BUT HAVE NOTED ONLY A TRICKLE OF ACTIVITY IN SCATTERED AREAS. INTERESTINGLY, NEITHER THE DC NOR THE PCI HAVE SHOWN ANY REAL ENERGY IN DEALING WITH THE SUBJECT OF DE-

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CENTRALIZATION, A FACT WHICH PERHAPS ILLUSTRATES THEIR SHARED UNCERTAINTY BOTH OVER THE LOGISTICS OF DECENTRALIZATION AND OVER ITS POSSIBLE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES. EFFORTS BY REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS, OUR BASIC CONCLUSIONS AND COMMENT REGARDING THE PCI ARE NOTED BELOW.

2. TOURISM: A NUMBER OF PLANS TO DEVELOP TOURISM IN THE SOUTH

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HAVE RECENTLY HAD BACKING FROM REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS, PERHAPS IN ANTICIPATION OF THE TRANSFER TO THE REGIONAL LEVEL OF FUNDS AND AUTHORITY FOR PROMOTING LOCAL TOURISM. CALABRIA AND BASILICATA REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS, BOTH CONSIDER TOURISM A GREATER POTENTIAL SOURCE OF JOBS AND REGIONAL INCOME THAN INDUSTRY. ORDERED DEVELOPMENT IS SOUGHT AND REGIONAL PLANS AS WELL AS LEGISLATION CONTEMPLATE IT (CALABRIA NOW HAS LEGISLATION PROHIBITING BUILDING WITHIN 150

METERS OF THE SHORELINE). DIFFICULTIES INCLUDE THE LACK OF A SKILLED WORK FORCE AND THE SHORT TOURIST SEASON WHICH REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS HOPE TO EXTEND BY DEVELOPING WINTER RESORTS. IN BASILICATA, THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT HAS INCLUDED IN THE FIVE-YEAR BUDGET IDEAS FOR FEASIBILITY STUDIES AND TOURIST PROMOTION IN TWO AREAS: AROUND MARATEA ON THE TYRREHENIAN SEA AND AT METAPONTUM ON THE IONIAN COAST. THE REGIONAL GIUNTA EXPECTS CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

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FUNDING ASSISTANCE FOR THE STUDIES WITH ACTUAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDED LARGELY BY PRIVATE ENTERPRISE. IN MATERA PROVINCE (BASILICATA) THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT HAS PARTICIPATED IN RELOCATING CERTAIN RESIDENTS OF THE SASSI AREA AND IN PLANNING THE FACELIFT OF THE PICTURESQUE CAVE DWELLINGS THERE. THESE INITIATIVES, IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT, ARE THE KIND THAT ARE ALMOST SELF-PROMOTING, SINCE TOURISM IS ONE OF THE FEW LARGE-SCALE INDUSTRIES OF THE SOUTH WHERE PRIVATE ENTERPRISE (TRAVEL AGENTS, TOUR COMPANIES, HOTEL AND RESTAURANT OWNERS) IS INCLINED TOWARDS REGULAR NEW INVESTMENT AND AGGRESSIVE MARKETING.

3. PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE TO SCHOOLS: CAMPANIA REGIONAL COUNCIL PRESIDENT GOMES D'AYALA (PCI) PRESSED FOR AN APPOINTMENT IN DECEMBER, WHICH I GAVE HIM, TO DISCUSS A VISIT TO THE US BY MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL. HE DID NOT SPECIFICALLY INCLUDE HIMSELF AS A POSSIBLE MEMBER OF THE GROUP. GOMEZ REQUESTED FACILITATIVE ASSISTANCE FROM ME FOR THE GROUP, WHICH WOULD VISIT
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THE AGRICULTURAL, ENGINEERING AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS OF SOME LEADING US UNIVERSITIES. THIS IS ONE OF THE FEW INSTANCES WHERE THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT HAS CONCERNED ITSELF WITH PROFESSIONAL TRAINING ORIENTATION PROGRAMS.

4. AQUEDUCTS: THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT IN PUGLIA RECENTLY SUPPORTED

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DEMANDS FROM THE TARANTO AND LECCE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS FOR THE FURTHER EXTENSION OF THE ACQUADOTTO PUGLIESE.

5. AGRICULTURE: BOTH IN PUGLIA (BRINDISI) AND BASILICATA (MATERA) THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE ATTEMPTED, WITHOUT MUCH SUCCESS, TO PROMOTE THE CONCESSIONAL FINANCING OF FARM EQUIPMENT PURCHASES BY SMALL-SCALE CULTIVATORS. THE MAYOR OF MATERA INDICATED HE IS SEEKING REGIONAL FUNDING FOR NEW AGRICULTURAL TRAINING, SOIL STUDIES AND INTRODUCTION OF MORE SCIENTIFIC FARMING METHODS.

6. NOTWITHSTANDING THE EXAMPLES CITED ABOVE, OUR BASIC CONCLUSION IS THAT DECENTRALIZATION HAS SO FAR FAILED TO EXCITE SOLID GOVERNMENTAL ACTION OR REGIONAL RESPONSE IN THE CONSULAR DISTRICT. THE FAILURE OF THE LAW 382 TO STIMULATE REAL ACTIVITY CAN BE TRACED TO SEVERAL FACTORS, I BELIEVE. FIRST, MINISTERIAL INTERESTS IN

ROME ARE NOT, OF COURSE, EAGER TO PROCEED WITH REFORMS WHICH, IF FULLY IMPLEMENTED, WOULD PASS REAL POLITICAL POWER AND PATRONAGE INTO THE HANDS OF NEW REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIONS AND THUS FORCE IMPORTANT REORGANIZATIONS OF PERSONNEL AND RESOURCES. SECOND, THE REGIONAL GIUNTAS THEMSELVES ARE NOT SUFFICIENTLY ORGANIZED TO ACCEPT THE DEVOLVEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY. IN CALABRIA OFFICIALS LAMENT THE INABILITY OF THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT EVEN TO UTILIZE

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AVAILABLE FUNDS. THE FACT THAT THE GIUNTA IS IN CATANZARO, THE ASSEMBLY IN REGGIO, AND THE COMMON POLITICAL MEETING GROUND AT LAMEZIA HAMPERS EFFECTIVENESS. IN CAMPANIA THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT
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CRISIS IS WELL INTO ITS FOURTH MONTH--WITH NO NOTICEABLE EFFECT ON THE COMMUNITY

7. THERE IS GENERAL UNCERTAINTY IN THE SOUTH OVER THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF DECENTRALIZATION AND, AS A RESULT, THE GENERAL TENDENCY IS TO PROLONG THE CURRENT SYSTEM RATHER THAN RISK THE UNPREDICTABLE. FINALLY, THE ENTRENCHED POSITION OF THE CHURCH AND ITS CONTROL OVER EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES PLAYS A STRONG ROLE IN MITIGATING AGAINST ANY MODIFICATIONS OF EXISTING GOVERNMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS IN THOSE SECTORS.

8. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT CURRENT DECENTRALIZATION DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE A DETERMINING FACTOR IN PCI GAINS OR LOSSES IN THE SOUTH. STILL, DECENTRALIZATION HAS OBVIOUS ADVANTAGES FOR THE PCI. PARTY ACTIUTSTS ALREADY OCCUPY SOME KEY REGIONAL COMMITTEE POSITIONS (A TREND WHICH CONTINUES TO GROW) AND HAVE CAPITALIZED ON DC TOLERATION OF THEIR INCREASED ROLE IN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT. IN MY JUDGMENT LAW 382 WILL, AT THE VERY LEAST, GIVE THE PCI A FIRM BASIS FOR DEMANDING A FULL SHARE OF PATRONAGE WHICH UP TO NOW HAS BEEN

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ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY IN THE HANDS OF THE DC. COLANTONIO.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAW, GOVERNMENT REFORM
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978NAPLES00693
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780161-0506
Format: TEL
From: NAPLES
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780461/aaaabzuz.tel
Line Count: 158
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 64f139b1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 78 ROME 18039
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2982498
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DECENTRALIZATION: LAW 382
TAGS: PGOV, IT
To: ROME
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/64f139b1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014